UbD 6/7, MI 5/6

The distinction between a multiple intelligences classroom and a traditional classroom is the difference in how the teacher approaches learning. Chapter 5 of *Multiple Intelligences* discusses the fact that the organization of a classroom should revolve around MI. I’m not sure how I feel about this idea. While I understand that it is important to take into account the abilities of each student, it is also important to not allow the difference in students affect the content of the classroom and what each student should be getting out of the course. Although, I do feel that if multiple intelligences are appropriately catered, the effects could be beneficial to all students. Chapter 6 of *Multiple Intelligences* expands on the presentation of information to students in the classroom. The presentation of information is key to the influence the information will have on each individual student. If the information is not absorbed in the initial presentation, it is common for students to push the information aside and not return to it in the future. It is important for teachers in an MI classroom to always be incorporating several different methods of presentation to ensure that students of all different intelligences have the same opportunity to retain the information and be successful. Another important aspect to incorporate into a classroom with multiple intelligences is the idea of checking for understanding. Without some sort of method to check for understanding, the teacher has virtually no idea who is and is not retaining the information, and thusly cannot make any adjustments to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to retain the information. Simple exercises can alleviate this tension, and give the teacher a better idea of the intelligences and abilities of the students as individuals as well as a group. Group chemistry is another essential aspect of the classroom that can be greatly influenced by the teacher’s ability to check for understanding.

*Understanding by Design* also focuses on the topic of content mastery in the classroom. It is important for students to feel confident with the information. Often times a student will distance themselves from any information that they do not understand, or do not feel the teacher as cared enough to present to them in a way they can understand it. This idea is what ruins many talents. If a student does not understand a particular aspect of math, it makes the whole course that much more challenging. Even though the student may be talented in math, distancing themselves from this specific area can create distress in all math classes in the future. Understanding the essential questions will not only allow for the student to understand the content, but it will also allow for the teacher to recognize a subject or method that a student may be having difficulty with. This is another area where checking for understanding can play a key role in the success of students. A successful teacher will incorporate multiple intelligences, essential questions, and checking for understanding to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to have mastery in any classroom.

7/9/13/14 MI

Chapter 7 of *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*, focused on “classroom ecology.” It is important to bring multiple intelligences in to the classroom not only for the individual in focus, but also for all the other students in the classroom. This idea not only deals with the content of the classroom, but also with the classroom management and the style in which the class is formatted. It essential for all students that the class ecology does not take away, but rather adds to the effectiveness of the classroom and the students learning. It is also essential that student’s work be passed back in a timely fashion. It is important for the students to feel as though they are being fairly evaluated, and that they all have an equal opportunity to succeed. Chapter 9 discusses an extension on the subject of grading in the classroom. As a student, I always found it ironic that it was almost as if my teachers were trying to trick me into getting an answer incorrect on an assessment. It is essential that we as teachers do not try to disadvantage our students on any sort of assignment or assessment. The book uses extra credit as an example of a way that our students may be disadvantaged. Although it may not seem it, if any information is important enough to be on the exam at all, it should be included as a question for assessment. It is also important that we do not reward students for getting answers correct that have no bearing on the content at hand. It is also important that students understand the importance of the information, and that information is carried across boundaries on a specific content area.

Chapter 13 focuses on the additional areas where multiple intelligences could be included: computer technology, cultural diversity, and career counseling. I believe that each of these aspects be included in the classroom in one-way or another. With knowing the types of students we will have in the classroom, it is important to understand the integration of all of these aspects into the classroom. Technology is especially prevalent because of the dependency that many students have on the use of technology inside and outside the classroom.

Chapter 14 introduces the idea of existential intelligence, the ninth intelligence, in the classroom. This intelligence is not officially included as an “intelligence” because it does not fit all the criteria that has been previously designated. This new intelligence is more focused on the philosophical perspective of the meaning of life and higher power in each student. This intelligence could create some controversy because it could include areas that some people might not want included in the classroom. This new intelligence will most definitely raise some concern based on its focus, but should definitely be looked at and incorporated into the everyday classroom.

8 UbD 8/11/12 MI

Chapter 8 of UbD discussed the principles of grading and giving feedback effectively. This chapter referred to the idea of not relating scoring and grading to letters or numbers. The author feels that grades should be related to proficiency as opposed to having the students strive for a particular letter grade. I am unsure about how successful this method would be. I feel that students are more likely to succeed when they know exactly what they are striving for. It is difficult to relate proficiency to a language and a goal that most students can understand. Although I agree that students should be graded somewhat on their proficiency and growth, why would we want to disregard a student's grade just because they have the natural ability and mastery of the subject? Just because they do not demonstrate growth in the traditional sense does not mean they do not have mastery of the subject.

Chapter 8 of MI discusses the idea of using multiple intelligences to capture the attention of all students. It is important to engage all students in order to have a successful classroom. Regarding multiple intelligences, considering all students will be essential to controlling and maintaining a successful classroom environment. Capturing and keeping students' attention is the key principle in fostering a positive relationship between the teacher and the students, and between the students as a classroom.

Chapter 11 of MI discusses special education in the classroom. It is important to understand special education in the classroom in order to make sure that all multiple intelligences are included. The book discusses the idea that successful special education revolves around the use of multiple intelligences in the classroom. I believe that this is true. If the needs of all students are catered to, students will be successful. With positive relationships and an understanding of the multiple intelligences, the teacher will be successful in fostering learning and development with all students.

Chapter 12 is about the application of the MI theory to cognitive skills in the classroom. This includes memory, higher thinking, and problem solving. It is important that students find a method of intelligence that works for him/her as an individual. It is also important to identify how students think and understand information being presented by the teacher. Categorizing students' intelligences will be essential to implementing successful multiple intelligences in the classroom. Doing this will ensure that all students are included and all students will be allowed the ability to learn in a way that will be effective for them.

7/8/9/10 FIAE

These four chapters focus on grading and the effects it has on students, teachers, and the classroom overall. Chapter seven focuses on the effects of grading on student performance. One thing I liked about this chapter is the fact that it discussed the importance of differentiating grading between students. It is important to give credit where credit is due. Just because a student hasn't gained the highest level of mastery, but they do the work hard and try to the best of their ability, should they not receive credit for that work? Of course they should. Although it is not always practical, students should receive credit for their work when it is evident that they have done the work and have tried to the best of their ability. There are many relevant issues when dealing with grading based on credit. We do not want to discourage a student who tries really hard but hasn't received mastery, and we don't want to encourage a poor work ethic even if the student has a natural mastery of the subject.

Chapter eight focused on positive grading. It is important to take into account all aspects that may go into how students complete their work. It is important to take into account work ethic, behavior, and the importance of teacher feedback. It is important to find a steady balance between grading based on a student's efforts and grading based on a student's mastery. It is important to find a balance because we do not want students to think they do not have to gain mastery of the subject as long as it appears they have done the work and put in the effort on paper. The book gave several examples of ways to not disadvantage students; not giving extra credit, not putting zeros in the grade book for late work, and not using homework as a summative assessment for the class.

Chapter nine focused on things to avoid when grading student work. It is important that we NEVER disadvantage students in any way. We should not make the process more complicated for them than it has to be to prove that they either have full mastery, or that they are able to put in their best effort to come up with an answer.

Chapter ten also discussed late work. One thing I do not agree with as an example of this, is giving zeros for late or missing work. It is important for students to be held accountable for their assigned work. On the other hand, it is important to allow students the proper amount of time needed to complete an assignment so they are not being disadvantaged by the teacher. In my mentor classroom at the high school, I have seen a prime example of how late or missing work can greatly influence an entire classroom. Because there is no late work policy in place, students are able to pass in their assignments whenever they feel like it without being penalized. In short, almost every student comes into class every day without having any homework done. This means that nothing gets accomplished in class, which is not helpful to anyone. While I understand it is important to take into account the other issues that students might be dealing with, it is also important to teach students responsibility and accountability in the classroom in every aspect. There are many ways to avoid this issue. Making sure the student know to talk to you ahead of time as opposed to not mentioning a reason whey their work is late, will still hold the student accountable, and will give the teacher more control to talk with the student and create a new date and time for the assignment. It is important that all students learn in the classroom, and in order for them to do this, it is important that the teacher be consistent and always hold the students accountable for their work in and out of the classroom.

11/12/13/14 FIAE

Chapter 11 of FIAE focuses on grading. Grading is one of the most daunting aspects of becoming a teacher. This topic has strong arguments on both ends of the spectrum in terms of the value and effectiveness of grading in education. The author presents major issues when it comes to grading; do we use zeros or really low grades that may strongly alter a student's overall grades? This issue also becomes seriously relevant when dealing with how to grade gifted students as well. Both of these issues can play into amounts of bias experienced in the classroom. This is where it comes to the teacher's decision, whether to base work on effort, or on correctness. Changing questions and assignments based on a student to student education could also help increase a student's chance of learning and success. The issue of giving students a zero for missing work is an issue that a lot of teachers struggle with because of the overpowering impact that zero might have on a student's overall grade. As a future teacher, I think each teacher should have a policy when it comes to late or missing work. What ever that policy might entail, it should always be made clear to students at the beginning of the semester/year. One policy I have always liked is the idea that homework is one whole grade, so each assignment is a certain number of points out of that whole percentage. I think this would avoid ruining a student's overall grade because they did not have time to complete a single homework assignment.

The importance of maintaing an organized grade book is a main topic of chapter 13. Keeping student work organized and grades organized will be essential to having a level or respect between you and your students. Also keeping track of student progress may help keep track of the changing levels of all students. Report cards also have a great deal to do with a grade book. Traditional report cards do not always tell the whole story of what is going on in the classroom. Report cards are especially important because parents will see them, as they are often addressed to the parent of the student. Report cards can lead to unpleasantries between parents and the teacher, which does not bode well for the teacher. These chapters were effective in discussing controversial topics, and providing examples and solutions for these problems.

7/8/9/10 FIAE

**Abstract**

Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10 in FIAE cover mainly grading in today’s classrooms. We, as teachers must keep in mind that we are doing this in a newly differentiated classroom. As a whole I think the chapters want us as teachers to consider the five W’s. Who are we grading, what are we grading, why are we grading, when do we grade, and where do we grade? As teachers, if we can answer these five things, then we are doing quite well. We can succeed in answering these questions by [collaborating with our colleagues](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov11/vol69/num03/Starting-the-Conversation-About-Grading.aspx). To be effective in our differentiation as teachers it is important to grade all our students fairly, as well as individually. The author highly suggests that as teachers, we are constantly thinking about assessment. As teachers our job is to assess, all the time, and in many different ways. There is a difference between assessment and grading ([Assessment vs. Grading](http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/basics/grading-assessment.html))We do this to better prepare our students to show an enduring understanding. Several grading structures are discussed in these chapters; some alike, some unalike but all grading. As teachers we will all have our own ways of grading, and our own policies. One common policy in this chapter was the [late work policy](http://ksuweb.kennesaw.edu/%7Eshagin/latework.htm). One thing I found effective was that as teachers “we can always do better” As a whole a teachers grading scale should be Fair, Equal, and Informative/consistent.

**Synthesis**

Chapter 7 of FIAE kicked off a discussion on the meaning behind the grade. A lot of block one recognized the impact grades (especially failing grades) have on student performance. In addition, the block focused on the idea that grades should show mastery of a subject and any attempts that do not show master should also not be graded. Ashley Godbout highlights two ways schools have avoided failing students and instead focused on mastery of the subject: “Some school districts follow an [A, B, C](http://www.usinspect.com/blog/abcs-grading), I scale where I represents incomplete and there is “failing” grade. Another school includes A, B and “you’re not done”. These are two great examples of fostering that idea that grades show mastery.”

For chapter 8 of FIAE, most of block one focused on the positive side of grading. For the most part the block recognized the need for teachers to use grading as a way of giving feedback to the students on the work that they have done. According to block one, students should get more than just a letter grade, the response should include positive things they have done and constructive response on how to do better. Cole summarizes best the dark side to the grading system used in schools today: “And we have a system that, annually, weeds out more students, which fails more students, which discourages more students from learning, than ever before.” As teachers we need to use grading as a tool to keep students in school and motivated rather than a method of getting rid of poor students.

Chapter 9 of FIAE brought out a little disagreement in the classroom. Most of block one agrees that grading homework is not something that should be done. Homework is practice and students should not be subject to summative assessment. Russell puts it best: “Every other assignment (not tests/projects/etc.) is about working with the student to aid their learning, not to judge them on their retention of material.” However, some practicum students voiced concern that if 0s or incompletes are not acceptable, there should be some method for keeping students responsible for completing their homework.

With chapter 10 focusing around redoing or making-up missed or failing assignments, most of block one was in agreement. Students should be given the opportunity to in some method redeem poor classwork. While each member of block one came up with a variation, there was consensus on the core meaning. Tyler Michaud stated a key point concerning the redoing of grades: “Every teacher has a different policy for their classroom and grades and that is not necessarily a bad thing, it just means that every teacher needs to make sure that their own practice is clear to the students and themselves; as long as their policy is consistent and fair it should yield positive results.” Whether or not a teacher allows for work to be redone, it is important that the students know ahead of time the policy or method that the teacher will grade.

